

To: Senator Luther Olsen and Representative Joel Kitchens, Co-chairs, and Members of the Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding

Fr: (Spooner)

Re: Support for the Establishment of a \$1000 Per Pupil Minimum Aid as Part of the General Aid Formula

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written comments/speak to you today on behalf of the Spooner School District.

I was very moved by the research done on this topic by our school district administration. I was hired by Spooner Area School District in 2015. During my time here I have tried to implement 3 fundraising ideas for my Technology Education Curriculum. I did this because my program cannot grow to keep up with the changing world of technology with the current funds provided. Fab Lab 2015-16, Rails Manufacturing 2016-17 to current, and now Youth Apprenticeship 2017-18. I have observed successful completion of all models and I feel that we have our fit with Youth Apprenticeship. The one thing that all of these programs have in common is a great commitment to students through longitudinal progressive work on behalf of the educator. In short, the teacher needs to be there for a long time, at least 3-5 years, to even become effective at implementing a program of this caliber and complexity.

When I came to this district everyone told me not to because of various reasons. I did because all I could think about was the concept, "Be the Fireman. The one running into danger when everyone else is running out." Educators are in many ways like firemen, they see a need and they do whatever they can to fill that need, sometimes endangering their financial well being and family structure to do so. If a fireman burns up in a fire, something is done instantly to make sure that nothing similar happens again. However, if an educator burns out there is no immediate response, no public outcry. This is my opinion; if educators are to be effective at the complex tasks they must master on a daily basis, something must be done to reduce turnover in rural districts. Raising the per pupil unit to the \$1,000 minimum is a necessity to raise budgets for schools. With more revenue schools can: offer cost of living raises annually, (Spooner Area School District didn't have one for 8 years), raise operating costs for high demand fields like Technology Education and STEAM classes, and lastly give educational professionals the confidence to sustain a high level of performance over a long career of effective educating.

Respectfully,

Josh Tischer  
Spooner Area School District  
Technology Education Teacher  
HS Football Coach  
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MS Head Track Coach  
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